5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935

EF6 Serbs
Historical Bulgaria EE2
Historical Yugoslavia EF2
Great Russians RF2
Slavic Peoples E16

B Y SP 795 793 756 [887] There is little trace of shamanism in the Balkans, and few instances of the combining of the functions of priest and doctor and magician except by accident. In peasant cults these offices are adopted to meet a special occasion, unless they are the speciality of a local wise woman. Women who have ceased to menstruate or widows may have to be chosen for certain rites, but this is only a temporary priesthood. The seeress mediates between ordinary people and spirits only when she is required to do so. Young men without physical defect only may be allowed to take part in certain ritual dances, etc. Almost each cult has its own 'priest'. The fulfilment of the village 'vows' and the sacrifice at the sacred village tree is performed by householders, and the high priest of the occasion is the host for that year. The mother of twins is, it is said, considered to be specially pure, and twins themselves have special occasional functions. I hazard that this arrangement is characteristic of peasant cults; and that the institution of a monopoly of priestcraft, whether on the part of the Christian church or by the priests of organised pagan cults, meant a profound social change, to uphold which popular custom had to be discredited.

B Y SP [845]

R SP 771 171 In Russia itself, so many parallels are found that a close

feature of the religious life of South Slav Orthodox communities and has died hard among the non-Orthodox. It represents an elaboration under peculiar circumstances of a strictly domestic cult with occasional ministrants, whose sporadic priestly duties are determined by their normal social function and status. A similar Lithuanian rite was also traditionally a strictly domestic affair. The *slava* embraces ideas and ceremonial found in the earliest accounts of Slav custom and which belonged to pre-Christian ideas, but other features, and the general form as we now know it, so closely resemble the celebration of the liturgy that the institution may well have arisen from an early practice of private celebrations, or imitations of the liturgy, perhaps at a time of a Christian minority, or further encouraged by the conditions of Turkish occupation. There is still a tendency to think that anything that is not traceable to the Churches' institutions is necessarily pre-Christian in origin. The cycle of Christmas rites also shows a mixture of sources and evidence of late formation, and considerable local variety when the cycle of the whole season, which may include rites transferred from other seasons, is considered. In any case, the past is not always 'fossilised'. While a

SP 795 174 771 793